Tearing the *Thracian* ſinger, in their rage?
That is an olde deuice; and it was plaid,
When I from *Thebes* came laſt a Conqueror.
The thrice three Muſes, mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceaſt in beggery.
That is ſome *Satire* keene and criticall,
Not ſorting with a nuptiall ceremony.
A tedious briefe Scene of young *Piramus*,
And his Loue *Thisby*; very tragicall mirth?
Merry and tragicall? Tedious and briefe? That is hot Ice,
And wondrous ſtrange Snow. How ſhall we finde the concord of this diſcord?

Philo. A play there is, my Lord, ſome ten words long,
Which is as briefe, as I haue knowne a play;
But by ten words, my Lord, it is too long;
Which makes it tedious. For in all the play,
There is not one word apt, one plaier fitted.
And tragicall, my noble Lord, it is: for *Piramus*
Therein doth kill himſelfe. Which when I ſaw
Rehearſt, I muſt confeſſe, made mine eies water;
But more merry teares the paſſion of loud laughter
Neuer ſhed.

Theſ. What are they that do play it?

Philo. Hard handed men, that worke in *Athens* here,
Which neuer labour'd in their mindes till now;
And now haue toyled their vnbreathed memories,
With this ſame play, againſt your nuptiall.

Theſ. And we will heare it.

Phi. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Vnleſſe you can finde ſport in their intents,
Extremely ſtretcht, and cond with cruell paine,
To do you ſeruice.

Theſ. I will heare that play. For neuer any thing
Can be amiſſe, when ſimpleneſſe and duty tender it.

Goe

Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.

Hip. I loue not to ſee wretchedneſſe orecharged;
And duety in his ſeruice periſhing.

Theſ. Why gentle ſweete, you ſhall ſee no ſuch thing.

Hip. He ſaies, they can do nothing in this kinde.

The. The kinder we, to giue them thanks for nothing.
Our ſport ſhall be, to take what they miſtake:
And what poore duty cannot do, noble reſpect
Takes it in might, not merit.
Where I haue come, great Clearkes haue purpoſed
To greete me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I haue ſeene them ſhiuer and looke pale,
Make periods in the midſt of ſentences,
Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,
And in concluſion, dumbly haue broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Truſt me ſweete,
Out of this ſilence yet, I pickt a welcome:
And in the modeſty of fearefull duty,
I read as much, as from the ratling tongue
Of ſaucy and audacious eloquence.
Loue therefore, and tongue-tide ſimplicity,
In leaſt, ſpeake moſt, to my capacity.

Philo. So pleaſe your Grace, the Prologue is addreſt.

Duke. Let him approach.

Enter the Prologue.

Pro. If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you ſhould thinke, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To ſhew our ſimple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Conſider then, we come but in deſpight.
VVe do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
VVe are not heere. That you ſhould here repent you,
The Actors are at hand; and by their ſhow,
You ſhall know all, that you are like to know.

Th